

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 AS-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15  
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 CPR-01 SSC-01 EB-07  
/053 W

-----055339 231018Z /21

P R 230905Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1487

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 9687

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, RP

SUBJECT: PHILIPPINE AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN REPORTEDLY REPLACED

1. EMBOFF HAS REPORTS FROM TWO SOURCES THAT PRESIDENT MARCOS HAS MADE DECISION TO NAME UNDERSECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FOR ADMINISTRATION MANUEL COLLANTES AS AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN. COLLANTES WILL REPLACE AMBASSADOR ROBERTO BENEDICTO. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF APPOINTMENT HAS NOT RPT NOT YET BEEN MADE, BUT AMBASSADOR BENEDICTO CONFIRMED TO EMBOFF DURING TELCON THAT HE WAS LEAVING JAPAN AND DID NOT RPT NOT DENY THAT COLLANTES WAS REPLACEMENT.

2. COMMENT: BENEDICTO REMAINS ONE OF PRESIDENT MARCOS' CLOSEST CONFIDENTS, AND HIS APPOINTMENT TO JAPAN WAS CERTAINLY INTENDED AS A MEASURE OF THE IMPORTANCE MARCOS ASSIGNS TO RELATIONS WITH THAT COUNTRY. HOWEVER, SOURCES IN JAPANESE EMBASSY MANILA HAVE TOLD US THAT BENEDICTO WAS NOT RPT NOT A SUCCESSFUL AMBASSADOR FROM THEIR POINT OF VIEW OWING TO HIS FREQUENT AND PROLONGED ABSENCES FROM TOKYO. IN FACT, BENEDICTO HAS WIDE-RANGING BUSINESS INTERESTS, AND HAS SPENT MOST OF HIS TIME IN  
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MANILA CULTIVATING THOSE INTERESTS AND HIS  
RELATIONS WITH THE PALACE.

3. BENEDICTO HAS SERVED, AND STILL SERVES TO SOME EXTENT, AS PRESIDENT MARCOS'S PRINCIPAL ADVISOR ON SUGAR. ON JUNE 16, PRESIDENT MARCOS ACTIVATED THE PHILIPPINE SUGAR COMMISSION, WHICH HAS EXISTED ON PAPER SINCE

FEB 1974. EMBASSY IS ASSESSING IMPORTANCE OF ACTIVATED COMMISSION ON SUGAR POLICY IN THE PHILIPPINES AND WILL REPORT ON THIS DEVELOPMENT SEPARATELY. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY SOURCE (WHO VERIFIED INFORMATION WITH BENEDICTO IN PERSON), THAT JOSE UNSON, HEAD OF SUGAR QUOTA ADMINISTRATION (WHICH WILL BE "ABSORBED" BY THE COMMISSION) WILL BE TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN. UNSON WILL BE REPLACED BY BENEDICTO AFTER THE AMBASSADOR HAS PUT HIS AFFAIRS IN ORDER FOR HIS DEPARTURE FROM TOKYO.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**TAGS:** PGOV, PDIP, RP, JA, (COLLANTES, MANUEL)  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009